

Ravalli County Open Lands Board
Meeting Minutes for April 19, 2007

6:30 pm

Commissioners Meeting Room, 215 S. 4th Street, Hamilton, Montana

This is a summary of the meeting, not a verbatim transcript. A CD of the meeting may be purchased from the Planning Department for \$5.00.

1. Call to Order – Dan Walker called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

A. Roll Call (See Attachment A, Roll Call Sheet)

i. Members

Phil Connelly (present)
Dan Dunagan (present)
Jim Ellingson (absent-excused)
Dan Kraft (present)
Gary Leese (present)
Alan Maki (present)
Kent Myers (present)
Mike Pflieger (present)
Craig Siphers (present)
Tim Tackes (present)
John Vore (present)
Dan Walker (present)
Paul Wilson (present)

Ex-Officio Members

Rob Johnson (absent-excused)
John Ormiston (present)

ii. Staff

Karen Hughes
Vanessa Perry
Laura Robinson

iii. Public

Dan Huls
Greg Lemon

B. Approval of Minutes – Dan Walker asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes from the March 29, 2007, meeting. **Kent** moved to accept the minutes. **John Vore** seconded the move. The minutes were unanimously approved.

The Board discussed the detail in the previous set of minutes and agreed they wanted a summary of the meetings. **Karen** stated that minutes in summary style were fine for basic business and for setting up committees, but in the future the minutes would need to be more detailed. **John Ormiston** motioned to accept summary style minutes. **Kent** seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. **Amendments to the Agenda** - There were none.

D. **Public Comment (Items not on the Agenda)** - There was none.

2. **Old Business**

A. **Creation of Subcommittees**

Dan Walker discussed creation of Education and Communication subcommittees. The board discussed combining the two subcommittees for now, due to their similar goals. This was unanimously approved by the board.

Craig volunteered to chair the new Education and Communication committee. The board was in agreement and **Craig** accepted the nomination.

Phil asked about the possibility of rotating members on the subcommittee. **Dan Walker** said that his idea for the Technical & Conservation Committee was to have it be a standing committee. **Alan** asked if chasing other money would fall under this committee. **Dan Walker** thought that would fall under fundraising. Discussion about a fundraising committee followed. **Vanessa** stated that the County Attorney's Office is looking into fundraising capability.

The board discussed concerns about the budget and the possibility of fundraising. **Dan Walker** stated that he likes the idea of fundraising but does not think this is a high priority at this time. The board discussed the Bitterroot Land Trust and application fees. **Dan Walker** said that Karen Hughes had expressed that the board might defer to staff regarding these needs. Staff agreed to draft a fee schedule.

Dan Huls mentioned potential funding from the Brainerd Foundation. **Karen** stated that the Planning Department is in discussions and should know the outcome in the near future. **Mike** asked if a portion of the funding from Brainerd could potentially be earmarked for the Open Lands Board. **Dan Walker** suggested the board defer funding ideas for now. Board members concurred.

Dan Walker asked which board members were not on a committee and stated that those who are not on the Technical & Conservation Committee should be on the Education and Communication Committee. He said that he would leave it up to the committee to meet and plan, but that he would like to have the names of the committee members.

B. **Schedule of Events**

Dan Walker opened the discussion by stating the board is not currently where he thought it would be based on the draft timeline created. He encouraged the board by stating he thought they were ready to look at reviewing projects. He suggested the possibility of a committee to help develop and plan when the board would need to go to the County Commissioners. **Karen** stated that the board is ahead of schedule. **Vanessa** asked if a committee or the entire board would want to look at the details. **Dan Walker** said that he would take this on with Vanessa and will email it out so that everyone could mark their calendars. **Craig** asked if

it was safe to say that the board will not be ready to review projects by May 1, 2007. **Mike** confirmed that was true.

3. New Business: Evaluation Criteria

A. Technical & Conservation Committee Report

Dan Walker congratulated the board for their efficiency and stated they are ready to go forward with the bond process.

Board members discussed the status of the bylaws. **Vanessa** stated that they are in legal review at this time. **Karen** said that the department sends out a list of issues and written questions to the County Attorney's Office each week and this matter should not take very long.

John Vore thanked those on the Technical & Conservation Committee and staff that were involved with the early drafts. He mentioned a concern with the scoring (See Attachment B, Draft Project Scoring Worksheet) and stated that a score of 50 would be required for the committee to review it. He commented that **Vanessa** had sent the latest draft documents out yesterday. The board discussed the Guidelines (See Attachment C, Draft Guidelines) and **Dan Walker** stated that it was his hope that the committee would come out with a solid recommendation through research instead of requiring the board to go through line items. **John Ormiston** stated that the committee could make a recommendation and suggested that someone move to adopt the guidelines. **John Vore** brought up some concerns with the scoring. One line in the Guidelines on pages 3-4 mentions a total of 100 points, but there is a possibility of 116 points due to the Special Attributes. **John Vore** suggested clarifying this by changing the text to state that the total is 100 points, but with Special Attributes the total could be up to 116 points. **Dan Huls** stated that he interpreted this to mean that the Special Attributes could help to up the application score if needed. **Dan Walker** thought it could be taken either way and stated that the committee could still bring forth a motion and then it could go back to the committee for further discussion. The board discussed adopting the criteria at this time. The board discussed the review process. **Craig** motioned to adopt the criteria as drafted by the committee. **Kent** seconded the motion. (Staff Note: There was not a vote on this motion at this point. See Board Action on page 5.)

Dan Walker asked for comments on the draft guidelines. **Phil** stated that under Leverage on the scoring worksheet, one point should be given for 1-15% of the value. **Dan Walker** suggested that it would be best to go through the guidelines and then through the criteria to expedite this process. **John Vore** asked if all the board members had reviewed the documents. **Gary** stated that he had not because he had just received them at the meeting. **Dan Walker** stated that the most effective way to proceed would be to trust the committee. **Craig** reiterated that this was a living document at this point and it could still be changed. **John Vore** agreed and gave a quick overview of the Guidelines, Worksheet and Pre-application (See Attachment D, Draft Pre-application Worksheet). **Phil** and **Mike** discussed the possibility of a minimum leverage. **Dan Walker** stated that he did not think that was necessary. **Phil** said that he was not suggesting setting the bar so high, but this idea would help to stretch the funds. The board

discussed the importance of the leverage. **Alan** clarified that if one application receives a score of 60 and another a score of 65 this would not mean that one is better than the other. These are guidelines and other things come into play. **Vanessa** said, as mentioned in the documents, this is just one tool at the board's disposal.

Gary Leese asked for clarification on how to respond to community members that do not like people telling them what they could/should do. **Dan Walker** replied that this is not the role of the board. The questions are valid and the Education & Communication Committee will address these issues. Zoning issues were discussed and **Alan** pointed out that zoning can change and this is affected by whoever is in office at the time. **John Vore** stated that zoned or not, the criterion and projects would be the same. The board discussed the importance of the Education & Communication committee with respect to these situations.

The board commented on some wording that needs to be addressed in the Guidelines.

- Page 2, "Additionally...and the Technical & Conservation Review Committee or a committee member will sit through that process."
- Page 2, Materials provided by the Applicant. The board suggested including "These materials provided by the Applicant, sponsoring Land Trust, or any qualifying, sponsoring organization or agency."
- Page 5, Agriculture, **Dan Walker** stated that items #6 and #8 appear to be very similar. The committee offered to take another look at this.
- Page 7, Special Attributes. The board suggested clarification of which board was meant under the Special Attributes section. **Vanessa** stated that the intention was this board.

Kent asked at what point the board would know the actual dollar amount being requested. **Dan Walker** stated that it might be on the pre-application. The board discussed the pre-application process and concluded that the land owner and the sponsoring organization will need to collaborate and get some of the legwork done. **Dan Walker** stated that we will have to keep in mind that we are not negotiating and we are not dealing directly with the landowners. The partners will be presenting the applications for consideration and the board will be awarding the bond funds. Discussion followed about whether or not the dollar amount should be placed on the pre-application. **Dan Walker** stated that it would help the board plan in regards to selling the bonds. He stated that the guidelines need to be cleaned up a bit. **John Ormiston** suggested board members inform the committee of their recommended changes to draft documents after the meeting. **John Vore** agreed to accept comments from the board through Friday, April 27, 2007.

Board Action – Craig motioned to table this discussion and send the Guidelines and Application Worksheet, back to the committee until the next meeting. **Gary** seconded the motion. The vote was called; the members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Public Comment – Dan Huls congratulated the board on a job well done.

B. Sale of Bonds

Dan Walker asked for comments on the process. **Karen** stated that we could invite our financial officer to attend the next meeting. **Dan Walker** agreed that would be a good guest speaker topic for the next meeting.

4. Ravalli Planning Staff: Updates and Report

- A. **Budget** – Vanessa stated the Planning staff needs to finalize the Open Lands Board budget request. Paperwork presented at the previous meeting needs to be submitted for line items at this time.
- B. **Fees to lessen the impact on the Open Lands Board Budget** – The board discussed the fact that neither Gallatin nor Missoula Counties charge application fees at this time, but Gallatin has license plate sales and Missoula has planning levy funds. **Karen** suggested a fee could be considered, but with a waiver procedure for certain circumstances. **Dan Walker** agreed that this would minimize the impact on the Open Lands Board budget. He suggested that the board come up with some recommendations.

5. Future Meeting dates and Proposed Agenda Items

- A. **Dan Walker** asked if the board would like to continue meeting on the third Thursday of each month. All were in agreement. The start time was discussed and a decision was made to change the start time to 7:30 p.m. Craig agreed to work with Vanessa to set up guest speakers as part of the Education & Communication Committee.
- B. Next Meeting: May 17, 2007, 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm, Commissioners Meeting Room

6. Adjournment – Dan Walker motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m.